

# **EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**

# OUR PURPOSE

Working Fields strengthens communities by increasing access to employment.

Our unique model, which combines staffing with peer coaching, empowers people to get and keep good jobs.

We connect jobseekers and local employers, then provide ongoing support to both.



## SPECIFIC PUBLIC BENEFIT

Working Fields promotes economic opportunities for individuals, organizations, and communities beyond the creation of jobs in the normal course of business.

Our supportive employment model helps individuals overcome challenges, such as:

- Justice system involvement (convictions, incarceration)
- Substance use disorder and associated stigma
- COVID-19 impact
- Discrimination (race, age, gender, sexuality)
- Access to resources (transportation, housing, childcare)

# OUR CULTURE

## THE WORKING FIELDS MISSION

To create independence and self-sustainability for any motivated individual, which in turn provides employers with a greater pool of potential employees.

## SECOND CHANCES

Working Fields was founded on the belief that individuals who have made mistakes—yet have accepted responsibility and acted to improve their lives—deserve another chance. A true second chance includes opportunities to return to the workforce as a way to become self-reliant, fully engage in relationships, support others, and contribute to their community.

## OUR VALUES



Equity in Action



Gratitude



Love



Stability



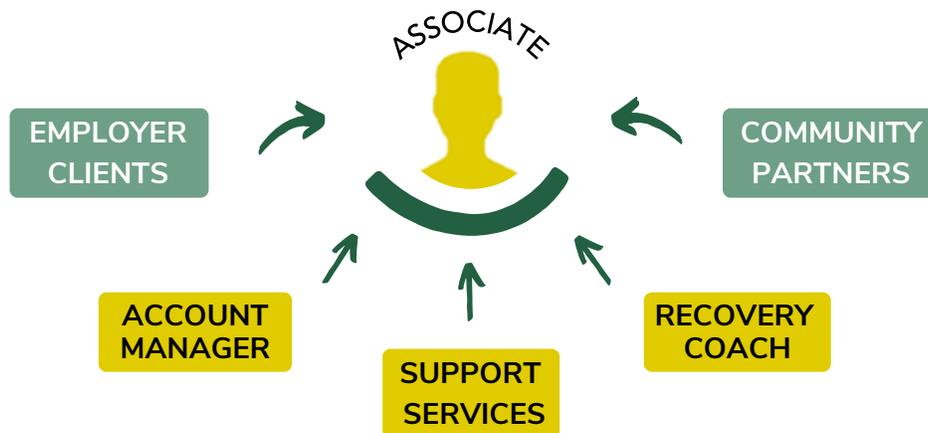
Honesty & Humility

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# OUR COMMUNITY

Our community includes jobseekers and workers on a staffing assignment ("associates"); local employers; and community service organizations (recovery centers, government agencies, etc).

## JOBSEEKERS & ASSOCIATES



Systemic barriers to employment often exclude people from the workforce. We help individuals address these challenges and build careers by providing job opportunities as well as a personalized support network for each associate (above).

Our services include:

- A stigma-free intake process
- Resume and application support
- Tailored job placements
- Weekly peer coaching
- Referrals and resource coordination

In 2021, we provided jobs and support to **265 ASSOCIATES.**



“

My experience with Working Fields has been absolutely incredible... You feel like a person. You don't feel like your past.

Jessica Gaboury  
Team Lead, Glavel

”

# OUR COMMUNITY

## EMPLOYERS

Businesses face challenges finding and retaining qualified talent, typically as a result of the same challenges detailed above. Employers want to hire more candidates who face systemic barriers to employment, but often lack the resources to do so sustainably.

Our model enables our partner employers to expand their hiring pools to include these candidates. We then help our employers manage, support, and retain associates placed with them.

“It's not just another avenue of the temp staffing model... [My account manager] is an extension of me.”

Casey Sullivan — Employer  
Staff Happiness Jedi, American Meadows



We worked with

**62 EMPLOYERS**

to fill jobs across

**9 INDUSTRIES.**

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We offer further support by partnering with community organizations. These groups — such as government agencies, nonprofits, and community centers — provide vital services in housing, transportation, workforce development, recovery, and more.

Our services build on this amazing network and connect it to the business community.



In 2021, we partnered with **224 ORGANIZATIONS** for **418 REFERRALS.**

## Measuring Our Impact

# B LAB ASSESSMENT



This management tool, used by over 50,000 businesses worldwide, including over 3,000 Certified B Corporations, helps companies assess their impact on various stakeholders, including their workers, community, customers, and the environment.

OVERALL SCORE 116.5	COMPLETION 100%	
OPERATIONS SCORE 51.3	IBM SCORE 62.4	N/A SCORE 2.8

Working Fields measured its 2021 impact using the B Impact Assessment tool (BIA). We chose this assessment to establish clear benchmarks for our first Benefit Report and to enable our long-term goal of B Corp certification.

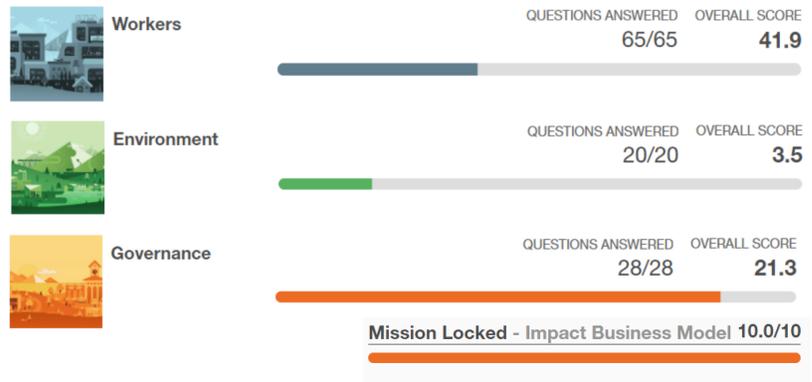
Our score for FY2021 is 116.5, above certification threshold (80).



## STRENGTHS & GROWTH TARGETS

The BIA identified clear strengths and areas for growth, particularly in these sections.

Our strong performance in the impact business model (IBM) and governance categories demonstrates that Working Fields is intentionally designed to benefit our community.



The assessment highlighted a gap in our impact: due to our structure as a staffing agency, internal Working Fields staff receive more benefits than associates and part-time workers.

We also noted environmental impact as significant area for improvement. Though environmental sustainability is a core value of our team, it has not been a company focus, and we did not have explicit goals or metrics in place.



## Measuring Our Impact

# WORKERS

Working Fields invested significantly in our workforce in 2021. We opened new offices in St Albans, VT, Manchester, NH, and Springfield, VT, and expanded service in other counties.

### INTERNAL STAFF

During the fall, our internal team created core values, which became the foundation of an employee engagement program.

We also expanded our employee benefits package to include:

- An HRA of \$1,000 annually
- A Simple IRA with 2% employer match
- Free access to an EAP
- Unlimited PTO
- Costs covered by Working Fields:
  - 80% of medical, dental & vision
  - 100% of short- and long-term disability
  - 100% of life insurance



**3**  
new offices



**8**  
new hires



**160%**  
team growth

We became a Staffing Industry Analysts "Best Staffing Firm to Work For" due in part to this work.

### ASSOCIATES & PART-TIME STAFF

To address pervasive transportation challenges, we rolled out van programs in Chittenden and Windsor Counties. Working Fields drivers shuttle associates to and from work several times a day.



**2**  
van programs

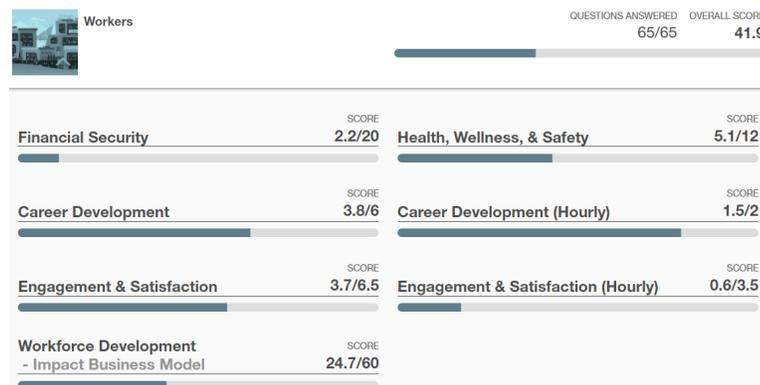
We augmented our peer coaching program by:

- Hiring more coaches, including a dedicated team manager
- Providing more sessions to new associates



**20**  
peer coaches

The BIA showed that while these services provide personal and professional support, we could do more for our hourly workers to address the inequities inherent to staffing models.



We recognize a disparity in equity between our permanent employees and our associates. Because our associates are hired on a "temp-to-perm" basis, they are not eligible for benefits until converting to a permanent hire. Though our business model does not currently support a benefits package for all employees, we will continue to explore solutions.

Continued on next page.

## ASSOCIATES & PART-TIME STAFF

Per the industry standard model, placement wages are set by employers. Therefore, Working Fields cannot guarantee a living wage. Instead, we aim to provide associates with experience, resources, and support that grows their earning potential over time.

Our average wage also rose by more than 10% from Q1 2021 to Q1 2022 thanks to new employer partners and wage increases by existing ones. We aim to continue that trend.

### Measuring Our Impact

## ENVIRONMENT

We have the biggest growth potential in the environment category. We recognize growth in this area is particularly critical with the acceleration of climate change and its outsized impact on many in our community.

Right now, Working Fields has no way to measure environmental externalities like water usage across our offices. We also have not assessed the environmental policies and impact of our supply chain vendors or partner employers. To improve our practices, we can implement an environmental management system and begin monitoring and recording usage for key utilities.

We have been able to provide a carpool group transportation to our employees via our van service, and will continue to explore the impact of transportation programs.

### Measuring Our Impact

## GOVERNANCE

The BIA confirmed that our business practices reinforce our core mission, and the specific public benefit we provide is inherent to that work. As a Benefit Corporation, our mission is locked into our company's structure. We also strive for transparent, open-book governance.

Some of our practices include:

- An independent board of directors that includes outside experts
- Clear job descriptions, performance metrics, and management structures
- Financial data shared with all staff quarterly
- Internal ethics guidelines and financial controls

Our governance model and unique business practices enable us to transform workforce development efforts in our region. This is further evidenced by our 2022 Workforce Innovation Award from the Lake Champlain Chamber.



## Increasing Our Impact

# GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

Working Fields established five company-wide goals in January 2022.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1. Cultivate our culture to reflect our values and mission.
2. Enable our teams to better serve and support associates by making continuous process improvements, maintaining an ongoing focus on training, and maximizing available tools (e.g. systems, outside resources, technology).

### SCALING OUR IMPACT

3. Grow each market by 1-2 placements per month for 150+% annual company growth.
4. Expand out-of-state reach via an existing office or by opening an additional one.
5. Increase outreach to the community and our partners to raise monthly referrals.

We used the BIA to augment these goals and identify action steps. We will continue to work towards B Lab certification by tackling these goals and documenting our processes.

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Increase workplace equity: Enhance the experience and benefits of associates and part-time employees.
- Raise our average wage: Partner with employers who offer living wages.

### SCALING OUR IMPACT

- Establish environmental metrics: Identify and track environmental goals.
- Improve internal data: Use our CRM and other resources to better measure our impact across each community.

## BENEFIT DIRECTOR STATEMENT

In my time at Hula, I've become quite familiar with the dialogue around attracting and retaining talent in the local business community. While I recognize the necessity of adding new Vermonters to our tax base, I've found that workforce development is too often lost in this conversation. If we are solely focused on attracting new workers to Vermont, we are furthering the existing wealth gap and reinforcing systemic cycles of addiction, poverty, abuse, and incarceration.

The Working Fields model proactively addresses barriers to employment – giving our neighbors a chance to reach their goals, support their families, and engage in our local economy. As a Vermont Public Benefit Corp, Working Fields is poised to compete with other for-profit staffing agencies and scale sustainably. We often equate *impact* to *charity*, but make no mistake, Working Fields is a value-add to the Vermont economy. Working Fields applies a humanistic and harm-reductionist approach to a tangible problem the market is facing: a state & nationwide labor shortage.

I joined the Working Fields board in September of 2021 because I believe in a bidirectional approach to workforce and economic development. In order to sustainably grow our economy, the business community must work from both the top-down and bottom-up to attract new Vermonters while addressing systemic barriers our existing workforce faces.

I am proud to present our first Benefit Report. I look forward to the growth & evolution of Working Fields and our impact over 2022.

Best,

*Cassidy Pettit*

Working Fields, Board of Directors & Benefit Director  
Hula, Investment Associate & Business Development